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# THE

# RURAL DISTRICT OF ELY

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## ANNUAL REPORT

MINISTRY OF HEALTH LIBRARY

for the year

1961

by

K. S. MAURICE-SMITH,

M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,

Medical Officer of Health.

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# ELY RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1961

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year ended 31st December, 1961 :

1. STATISTICS :

During 1961 the usual statistics have been kept and are available.

2. GENERAL HEALTH SERVICES :

(a) Ambulances.- Two ambulances are stationed at Ely, both being operated by the Isle of Ely County Council.

The Littleport St. John Ambulance continues to work under the agency agreement with the County Council. This vehicle, which serves the local area, and those areas adjoining when necessary, continues to be of the greatest value.

During this year, the members of the St. John Ambulance Brigade in Ely and Littleport have continued to serve the public by their duties as Ambulance Attendants.

The maintenance of these services in the future is becoming more and more uncertain as demands of work and age are throwing an impossible burden on those willing shoulders who remain.

It is a great tragedy that the call from the ill and injured falls on deaf ears, with the result that there are no recruits forthcoming to the St. John Divisions.

(b) Nursing and Clinic Arrangements.- Arrangements continue as in previous years. Once again, I place on record our thanks to the Nurses in the District, who unobtrusively carried on with their magnificent work.

# FIJI RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1961

Gentlemen, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year ended December, 1961 :

### STATISTICS :

During 1961 the usual statistics have been kept and are available.

### GENERAL HEALTH SERVICES :

(a) Ambulances.- Two ambulances are stationed at Fiji, both being operated by the Isle of Fiji County Council.

The Lautoka St. John Ambulance continues to work under the agency agreement with the County Council. This vehicle, which serves the local area, and those areas adjoining when necessary, continues to be of the greatest value.

During this year, the members of the St. John Ambulance Brigade in Fiji and Lautoka have continued to serve the public by their duties as Ambulance Attendants.

The maintenance of these services in the future is becoming more and more uncertain as demands of work and age are throwing an impossible burden on those willing shoulders who remain.

It is a great tragedy that the call from the ill and injured falls on deaf ears, with the result that there are no recruits forthcoming to the St. John Divisions.

(b) Nursing and Clinic Arrangements.- Arrangements continue as in previous years. Once again, I place on record our thanks to the Nurses in the District, who unobtrusively carried on with their magnificent work.

2. GENERAL HEALTH SERVICES (Contd.)

(c) Hospitals.-

(i) Tower Hospital for Chronic Sick

(ii) St. John's Hospital for Infectious Diseases and Long-stay Cases

(iii) The Grange Maternity Home

These three Hospitals are under the control of the Regional Hospital Board.

3. WATER :

(a) (i) The supply for the District is drawn from two chalk wells at West Row, and water supplies of adequate quantity and quality have been maintained during the year.

During past years I commented on the urgent need for increased water storage and distribution in the District, and I will repeat these comments again in this Report.

The water supply for the District will shortly be the responsibility of the new Water Board, whose intention it is to link the source at Isleham with that of the Ely Rural District source at Beck Row. A new main is to be laid from Isleham to the new Water Tower, which is to be built near the Royal Air Force Hospital, at Ely. The Tower will serve both Ely Urban and Ely Rural Districts.

The Consulting Engineers are now preparing schemes for this.

(ii) There have been no major breakdowns during the year.

(b) (i) The Chloramine Plant has been in use continually and has proved satisfactory. The chloramine process permits of the treatment of the water at the source.

(ii) The usual chemical and bacteriological examinations were made during the year and proved satisfactory. In addition, all new mains are sampled and no connections are made until the reports on these samples are found satisfactory.

(iii) There have been no extensions during 1961.

(iv) The water has no plumbo-solvent action.

(v) Between 98-99% of houses in the District are supplied with water.

(c) Hospitals.-

(i) Tower Hospital for Chronic Sick

(ii) St. John's Hospital for Infectious Diseases and Long-stay Cases

(iii) The Grange Maternity Home

These three Hospitals are under the control of the Regional Hospital Board.

WATER :

(a) (i) The supply for the District is drawn from two single wells at West Row, and water supplies of adequate quantity and quality have been maintained during the year.

During past years I commented on the urgent need for increased water storage and distribution in the District, and I will repeat these comments again in this Report.

The water supply for the District will shortly be the responsibility of the new Water Board, whose jurisdiction is to link the source at Isleham with that of the City Rural District source at Stock Row. A new main is to be laid from Isleham to the new Water Tower, which is to be built near the Royal Air Force Hospital, at Ely. The Tower will serve both Ely Urban and Ely Rural Districts.

The Consulting Engineers are now preparing schemes for this.

(ii) There have been no major breakdowns during the year.

(b) (i) The Chlorination Plant has been in use continually and has proved satisfactory. The chlorination process permits of the treatment of the water at the source.

(ii) The usual chemical and bacteriological examinations were made during the year and proved satisfactory. In addition, all new mains are sampled and no connections are made until the reports on these samples are found satisfactory.

(iii) There have been no extensions during 1961.

(iv) The water has no plumbo-solvent action.

(v) Between 98-99% of houses in the District are supplied with water.

4. SEWERAGE :

(a) Once again, I have to report steady progress in the Council's programme for sewerage improvement in the District.

(b) The Sutton and Witcham schemes have been completed.

Tenders have been received and tender approval has been given by the Minister of Housing & Local Government for the Stretham Scheme. The Contract has been signed and work is due to commence on the 1st January, 1962.

The Witchford Scheme has been prepared and is now with the Ministry awaiting approval.

The Consulting Engineers are still in the process of preparing plans for Mepal.

To be able to produce such an impressive list of projects all being pursued at the same time for the benefit of the various parishes, must be a source of great satisfaction to the Council and to those Officers concerned.

5. HOUSING :

Ely Rural District Council

Permanent Housing:

| | |
|---|---|
| No. of dwellings completed during 1961 | Nil |
| No. of dwellings provided under Housing Acts to 31st December, 1961 | 1547 |
| No. of dwellings under construction at 31st December, 1961 | 18 |
| No. of pre-war Council houses improved during 1961 by the provision of standard amenities as defined in the House Purchase and Housing Act, 1959, i.e., bath in bathroom, wash-hand basin, hot water supply, water-closet and foodstore | 53 |
| No. of pre-war Council houses so improved since commencement of scheme in 1958 | 197 |

Steady progress is being made with this scheme to convert those Council houses with earth or pail closets to water closets and install bathrooms and hot water supplies. Those tenants concerned - and I - will be extremely pleased when the scheme is completed.

(c) Once again, I have to report steady progress in the Council's programme for sewerage improvement in the District.

(d) The Bratton and Witham schemes have been completed.

Tenders have been received and tender approval has been given by the Minister of Housing & Local Government for the Stretton Scheme. The Contract has been signed and work is due to commence on the 1st January, 1962.

The Witchford Scheme has been prepared and is now with the Ministry awaiting approval.

The Consulting Engineers are still in the process of preparing plans for Mepal.

To be able to produce such an impressive list of schemes all being pursued at the same time for the benefit of the various parishes, must be a source of great satisfaction to the Council and to those Officers concerned.

## HOUSING :

### Government Houses.

| | |
|---|---|
| No. of dwellings completed during 1961 | 181 |
| No. of dwellings provided under Housing Acts to 31st December, 1961 | 1547 |
| No. of dwellings under construction at 31st December, 1961 | 18 |
| No. of pre-war Council houses improved during 1961 by the provision of standard modernisations as defined in the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1959, i.e., bath in bathroom, wash-hand basin, hot water supply, w.c.-closet and floodwaters | 53 |
| No. of pre-war Council houses so improved since commencement of scheme in 1959 | 197 |

Steady progress is being made with this scheme to convert those Council houses with earth or pail closets to water closets and install bathrooms and hot water supplies. These terms mentioned - and I - will be extremely pleased when the scheme is

HOUSING (Contd.)

Temporary Housing:

| | |
|---|---|
| No. of converted ex-service huts occupied at 31st December, 1961 | 22 |

Slum Clearance:

| | |
|---|---|
| No. of Demolition Orders and Closing Orders made - and Undertakings withdrawing Unfit Dwellings from Use for Human Habitation accepted - during 1961 | 7 |
| No. of families rehoused by Council from unfit dwellings (including converted ex-Service huts) during 1961 | 5 |

Private Enterprise:

New Permanent Houses:

| | |
|---|---|
| No. of dwellings completed during 1961 | 42 |
| No. of dwellings completed since April 1945 | 371 |
| No. of dwellings under construction at 31st December, 1961 | 26 |

Subsidised Provision and Improvement of Dwellings

Housing (Financial Provisions) Act, 1958:
Section 46 - New Dwellings for Agricultural Workers - £10 or £15 per annum for 40 years from Completion

| | |
|---|---|
| No. of dwellings completed during 1961 | 4* |
| No. of dwellings completed since April 1945 | 38* |
| No. of dwellings completed since 1938 (commencement of scheme) | 66 |

* These figures are included in numbers under heading "New Permanent Houses" above.

Temporary Buildings

| | |
|---|---|
| No. of converted ex-service huts occupied at 31st December, 1951 | 22 |

Slum Clearance

| | |
|---|---|
| No. of Demolition Orders and Closing orders made - 1951 Undertakings withdrawn during 1951 Dwellings from the for human habitation accepted - during 1951 | 7 |
| No. of families rehoused by Council from unfit dwellings (including converted ex-service huts) during 1951 | 5 |

Private Enterprise

New Permanent Houses

| | |
|---|---|
| No. of dwellings completed during 1951 | 42 |
| No. of dwellings completed since April 1945 | 314 |
| No. of dwellings under construction at 31st December, 1951 | 26 |

Subsidised Provision and Improvement of Dwellings

Housing (Financial Provisions) Act, 1938: Section 46 - New Dwellings for Agricultural Workers - 230 or 115 per annum for 40 years from Completion

| | |
|---|---|
| No. of dwellings completed during 1951 | 14 |
| No. of dwellings completed since April 1945 | 384 |
| No. of dwellings completed since 1938 (commencement of scheme) | 66 |

* These figures are included in numbers under heading "New Permanent Houses" above.

Housing (Financial Provisions) Act, 1958:
Section 30 - Dwellings Improved or Provided by Conversion of Buildings with aid of Discretionary Improvement Grant

| | |
|---|---|
| No. of dwellings improved or provided - and amount of grant paid - during 1961 | Nil |
| No. of dwellings improved or provided - and amount of grant paid - since 1949 (commencement of scheme): | 181 dwellings<br>£44,482:10: 5 |

Whilst no Discretionary Grants have been made during 1961, the Council decided to resume these towards the end of the year.

House Purchase & Housing Act, 1959:
Section 4 - Dwellings Improved by Provision of Standard Amenities (as specified above) with aid of Standard Grant

| | |
|---|---|
| No. of dwellings improved - and amount of grant paid - during 1961: | 83 dwellings<br>£10,501: 3: 2 |
| No. of dwellings improved - and amount of grant paid - since 1959 (commencement of scheme): | 130 dwellings<br>£16,460: 7: 8 |

SCHOOLS :

I have no comments to make.

MILK :

The Milk (Special Designations) (Specified Areas) Order, operating since April 1959, is still in force. This Order prohibits the retail sale of raw milk unless it carries the special designation "Tuberculin Tested" under the Milk (Special Designation) Regulations, 1960.

When the subject of milk is considered, the dangers of the transmission of tubercular infection frequently comes to the fore, and it is either forgotten or unknown that other forms of infectious disease can be spread by infected milk. I must point out that, so far as milk-borne infectious diseases are concerned, efficient Pasteurisation is the only answer. The 1959 Order does, of course, permit the retail sale of milk carrying the special designations "Pasteurised" and "Sterilised" under the 1960 Regulations.

MILK (Contd.)

Once again, I ask those offenders among the general public, who continue to use milk bottles to hold fluids other than milk, to desist from this frankly, filthy and highly undesirable practice.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES :

(a) 138 notifications of infectious diseases were received, the total being made up as follows :

| | |
|---|---|
| Measles | 112 |
| Whooping Cough | 16 |
| Pneumonia | 6 |
| Scarlet Fever | 2 |
| Food Poisoning | 1 |
| Puerperal Pyrexia | 1 |
| | 138 |

Apart from the frequency of measles occuring in the District, the incidence of infectious disease has been negligible. During the past five years, the only massive outbreaks of notifiable infectious diseases have been measles, fortunately of a very mild type and with very few complications.

I am quite unable to give any reasons, why this particular disease should be so prevalent.

Despite careful investigation it was not possible to trace the source of the single case of food poisoning which occured during the year.

(b) Again, I have to report, with the greatest satisfaction, that no case of diphtheria occurred in the District. I know, however, that by no means every child has been immunized against this killer-disease. To ensure that the District is kept free of this infection, every child must be immunized in infancy.

Immunization against polio-myelitis continues to be carried out by general practitioners and in the County Council Clinics.

(c) Tuberculosis:

No new cases were notified during the year. After making the necessary adjustments there are now the following numbers on the Register:-

| Respiratory | | Non-Respiratory | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Females | 26 | Females | 6 |
| Males | 36 | Males | 1 |

Compared with 1960, the figures show a decrease of 1 case.

. INFECTIOUS DISEASES (Contd.)

Looking back over the past thirty-five years, it is extremely interesting to note how the position of tuberculosis in the community has changed. With modern drugs and careful supervision the morbidity and mortality caused by Tuberculosis shows a great improvement. Many cases can be safely cared for at home, thereby releasing many Sanatoria beds for other purposes.

There is no doubt that Mass Radiography Units have played an important role in this battle.

. FOOD :

(i) The following is a list of food handling premises in the area :

| | |
|---|---|
| Butchers | 12 |
| Bakers | 5 |
| Fried Fish Shops | 3 |
| Confectioners | 5 |
| Cafes | 5 |
| Licensed Premises | 43 |
| Greengrocers | 3 |
| Canteens | 1 |
| Grocery and General | 52 |
| Food Stores | 4 |
| Chemists | |

(ii) 56 premises are registered for the storage and sale of ice cream.

Milk distributors and Dairies registered under the Milk & Dairies (General) Regulations 1959 = 5.

There is no ice cream manuafctured for sale in the area.

Food Hygiene:

I cannot report any material change for the better in food hygiene in the District.

This is not due to any failure on your Officer's part to appreciate the importance and seriousness of this subject. Rather it is due to a promblem of man-power and time. An increase in the Public Health Department Staff would enable very much greater supervision to be carried out. Clearly, adequate supervision and the constant maintenance of high standards of food hygiene cannot be enforced by one or two quick visits in a year. Repeat visits of adequate duration are the only means whereby this goal can be reached.

Good employers continue in their efforts to maintain their high standards, and to keep their employees as keen as they are themselves. They are to be congratulated, once again.

FOOD (Contd.)

The careless and indifferent employers continue to be careless and indifferent, and as a consequence their employees generally become careless and indifferent in their turn. These are to be definitely condemned.

Last year, I referred to the advantages to be gained, if the Education Authorities were to include in the school curriculum for the older children some instruction in food hygiene. This could well result in improvement in home food hygiene, (which continues to be deplorable in far too many homes) but it could also result in those children, when they reach adult life, refusing to deal with shops maintaining a poor level of hygiene.

Unsound Food:

The following items of food were surrendered unfit for food and destroyed :

| | |
|---|---|
| Tinned Meat | 7 tins = 8 lbs. |
| Other tinned Foods | 45 tins = 53 lbs. |

MISCELLANEOUS :

(a) Rodent Control:

During the year the Public Health Inspector and the Rodent Officer have done 478 domestic house and business premises inspections, and 459 treatments and re-treatments have been carried out.

(b) Moveable Dwellings:

The two multiple Caravan Sites in the District continue to operate satisfactorily.

Generally speaking the position has improved in comparison with a few years ago. At the same time there is still some more work to be done before the position is really satisfactory.

(c) Factories Act:

The position is the same as for previous years. There is only one Factory of any size in the District.

I am hoping, however, to review the whole subject in the near future.

MISCELLANEOUS (Contd.)

Slaughter-houses:

There is now only one Slaughter-house in the District. The report to the Ministry submitted in 1960 was approved. At the end of 1961, there were, however, certain alterations and modifications still outstanding, and these will have to be completed before another licence can be granted.

The application for the second Slaughter-house, mentioned in my Report for 1960, was withdrawn and the premises accordingly have been closed.

Number of animals slaughtered = 1,345

Number of carcases inspected = 135

(e) Clean Air:

No problems arose during the year.

The stench of Diesel fumes from lorries etc., continues to assault the nostrils of many living in the District, producing varying degrees of nausea, and most probably other ill-effects in later years.

(f) Noise:

Over the past twenty-five years one subject on which I have made no comments, is that of Noise.

However, during the past ten years, noise generally has increased enormously, at times to an almost intolerable degree. Aircraft overhead, of varying sizes and speeds; lorries of varying size and age, a few private cars and most motor cycles all add together to produce a cacophony, which wearies the ear, frets the nervous system and at times disturbs the sleep of many. It must be admitted that in our present civilization, aircraft, lorries and many cars are an essential and inevitable part of our transport system. But one can only condemn the infernal nuisance caused by the noisy motor cycles which roar round the District at certain times, apparently without any aim or object. If the District could be relieved of these, only good would result to many nervous systems.

Slaughter-houses:

There is now only one Slaughter-house in the District. The report to the Ministry submitted in 1950 was approved. At the end of 1951, there were, however, certain alterations and modifications still outstanding, and these will have to be completed before another licence can be granted.

The application for the second Slaughter-house, mentioned in my Report for 1950, was withdrawn and the premises accordingly have been closed.

Number of animals slaughtered - 1,345

Number of carcasses imported - 135

Clean Air:

No problem arose during the year.

The stench of Diesel fumes from lorries etc., continues to assault the nostrils of many living in the District, producing various degrees of nausea, and most probably other ill-effects in later years.

Noise:

Over the past twenty-five years one subject on which I have made no comments, is that of noise.

However, during the past two years, noise generally has increased enormously, at times to an almost intolerable degree. Aircraft overhead, of varying sizes and speeds, lorries of varying size and age, a few private cars and most motor-cycles all add together to produce a cacophony, which jarrings the ear, irks the nervous system and at times disturbs the sleep of many. It must be admitted that in our present civilization, aircraft, lorries and motor cars are an essential and inevitable part of our transport system. But one can only condemn the internal nuisance caused by the to and fro motor cycles which roar round the District at certain times, apparently without any aim or object. If the District could be relieved of them, only good would result to many nervous systems.

PERSONAL :

In October, a very regretful official goodbye was said to my old colleague and adviser - Mr.C.W.Wickens. I can only wish him in retirement all that he wishes himself.

To his successor Mr.J.E.Ward, I express my thanks for his help and likewise, to the Deputy Clerk, Mr.W.Parr.

To Mr.Clifford Jones and his Staff, Mr. Arnold Cross, and to Mr.Burtt and his Staff, I wish to record, yet once again, my grateful thanks for their help and advice throughout the year under review.

I have the honour to be, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

K. S. MAURICE-SMITH,

Medical Officer of Health,
Ely Rural District Council.